

JAPAN CHRISTIAN ACTIVITY NEWS

Chairman

Tsunetaro Miyakoda

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Editors:

Kaname Tsukahara

William C. Weiss

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STUDENT CARAVAN TO NORTHERN KYUSHU COAL MINERS AREA

Earlier this year we reported on the Church World Service milk station project in the northern Kyushu area. The area is still suffering from the effects of rapid social change. It was reported in one area to which the caravan went that of the 1000 children in the area, 400 were in families receiving government support because their fathers were unemployed.

A cooperation Christian committee has been set up in the area to help the unemployed and in cooperation with this committee, students in International Christian University, Tokyo Theological Seminary, St. Paul's University (Episcopal) and Meiji Gakuin organized a three-week caravan. Students from Tokyo Women's College, Showa Women's College and Aoyama University participated on an individual basis. Fifty-eight students divided up into 5 teams, spending a period of one week in one place, thus covering 15 places in the period from August 1 to August 21. They helped 5000 children through a program of helping with their studies, group play and fellowship and especially providing them with a noon-time lunch. During the school year, lunches were provided at the school, but with vacation there was no substitute program

set up and the bread and milk served to the children was appreciated very much. The mothers in the area also helped the students in distributing the food at lunch time. The flour and milk had been provided by JCWS. Their travel expenses were provided by JCWS and the students raised an additional \$ 250.- in contributions toward the project.

In one week the students made a splendid witness to Christianity among the non-Christians. One man said, "If your heavenly Father has sent you to do this He must be very great." One child wrote in a composition "many people have come to look at the situation but these are the first students who have come to help us. When I grow up I also want to help the people in need." Another little boy wrote, "I liked the students so much and when they return I will be very lonely. I hope with all my heart that they will come again next year." Some of the parents expressed the same thoughts as their children. "The purpose was not the teaching of the story of Christianity but living together in the Christian spirit. "Out of this grew an interest to hear the story of Christianity.

When the Japanese editor visited the area many came up and expressed their thanks. The children became so attached to the students "their big brothers and sisters" that they had little time for rest and were getting very tired. Many times articles about the project appeared in the Kyushu newspapers and it was reported on the radio also.

YOUTH COMMISSION OF KYODAN SPONSORS "ISE BAY YOUTH SERVICE PROJECT"

As another response to the continuing needs in the typhoon-stricken area in Ise Bay, the Kyodan Youth Commission is sponsoring a "continuing service project" which began in March of this year.

After cooperating in the Izu, Yamanashi and Nagoya areas with Church World Service during the time immediately after the typhoon, the need was felt by the Youth Commission to continue in some way helping the people in the area in the work of rehabilitation. Much remained to be done in the area of clean-up, draining and removing sand from fields, digging out dead trees, other types of reconstruction, nursery school programs, restoring church properties and in "general-entering into the life of the community to share the suffering, to console the down-hearted and to show the riches of God's grace to all men."

In relation with the Chubu Kyoku (presbytery) in which the area is located, a program was worked out. Mr. Kyuichi Uehara, a recent graduate of Tsurukawa Rural Seminary, who has mechanical abilities as well as theological training, was appointed director of the project. He also had experience in the relief work immediately after the typhoon. Mr. Eiji Takada of the Chubu Kyoku helped much on the local level and took charge of the finances. A small truck was purchased to move equipment and

personnel. Several places for housing the participants were also organized. Dr. and Mrs. Eto of Yatomi helped the campers in many ways, not only helping the needy with medical care, but visiting the campers to boost their morale and providing accommodations in the hospital and their own home when necessary.

Applications to participate in the project were sent to the Chubu Kyoku working out the time of service in so far as possible with the applicants wishes. The suggested length of service was at least 4 days. Some came individually with their parent's consent and others in groups with their own leaders. Foodstuffs were provided and prepared by a KP schedule. In so far as possible, bedding was provided.

Participants paid their own travel expenses. "A continuing on-going group with leadership, a camp-life program and work direction" was provided into which the participants and participating groups entered during their period of service. Groups varied from the 50 students of Kanto Gakuin (Baptist) to the 12 students from the Shinanomachi Student Center who went to work with the children. It is estimated that 2,500 man days of work were put in and that approximately 1,000 young people (some repeats) had participated in the project thus far.

Although it is a Youth Commission project it has been publicized as a "Christian project" only. Generous contributions by the Southern Presbyterian, Christian Reformed, the Baptist Church, and the World Council of Churches in addition to funds received by the Kyodan for the disaster made it financially possible to support the needs of the work project.

There will be continuing work in the area during the next vacation periods. This area was an area of well-to-do farmers, 80% of Japan's figs were grown in the area, it was also known for its pomegranates and gold fish hatcheries. The people received their settlement from the government and received much help in tiding them over to the present time. The problem now is to get the land in condition so it can support their livelihood again, since the temporary support is being discontinued.

Another such "continuing service project" will probably start in October in the Shizuoka area, where the last disaster occurred. A small group under the leadership of an elder of the Shimada Church, Mr. Oishi, is already in the area.

The Youth Commission hopes that this program will be continued in broader areas throughout the Japanese Church. "Although there is not the opportunity for the depth of fellowship and service provided in the camps of longer periods.....seeking to meet the needs of the hour..... it often gives a far more penetrating type of witness."

NCC SPONSORED WORK CAMP HELD AT NAGOYA

Under the sponsorship of the WCC and the NCC of Japan, an Ecumenical Work Camp was held in Nagoya from July 20-August 17.

Sixteen campers from nine foreign countries joined eighteen Japanese in building a playground for the Nagoya Christian Social Center (This center is the outgrowth of cooperative Christian work in the Nagoya typhoon of last year. See January issue). When dedicated on September 26, 1960, the center will stand as a memorial to the thousands who lost their lives on the night of September 26, 1959, when typhoon Vera struck Nagoya. It will also memorialize the work of the hundreds of students who shared in disaster relief in the area following the typhoon. Their work opened the way for the center and the work camp.

Another part of the work camp's program was, in cooperation with the people of the Minami Ward area, to clear out the blocked drains, repair roads and cut grass. The relationship between the camp and the community was a close and meaningful one, and members of the staff of the social center have expressed the opinion, that the work of the center will be made much more effective with this foundation of good will on which to build.

The campers engaged in discussion and Bible study directed toward the ecumenical encounter and it was an eye-opening experience for many to have ideas and views with those of other denominations and countries.

Rev. Mr. Randolph Jones, co-director of the camp said "... That although the camp was a success.... the sponsorship of the Ecumenical Work Camp should be reviewed." "He felt strongly that the NCC should give it more "financial and psychological support." Since its beginnings in 1949 through the efforts of Rev. Mr. Hal Shorrock (now with CWS in Korea), it has become increasingly difficult to get funds and participants for the work camp program.

JAPANESE MISSIONARY PROFESSOR SENT TO THAILAND

Dr. Kosuke Koyama, his wife Lois and eleven month old son left by air for Bangkok on August 25. Their first year will be spent in language study and then they will move to Chiang Mai where he will be on the staff of McGilvery Seminary.

Dr. Koyama graduated from Tokyo Union Theological Seminary eight years ago and then went to the States for further study. He graduated from Drew Theological Seminary with a B.D. degree and then went on to Princeton where he completed the work for the ThD degree writing his dissertation on Luther's commentary on the Psalms. At Princeton he met Lois Rozendaal, who had returned from 5 years of missionary service at the Kodai Kanai School in India. They were married two years ago in New York and returned to Dr. Koyama's country this Spring.

In response to the Church of Thailand's request, it was agreed that the Koyamas should go to the seminary. The United Church contributed approximately \$ 90,- toward their support there until they left and will continue to contribute \$ 300.- yearly toward their support while on the field. The United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., the Disciples of Christ and the Northern Baptists are cooperating in underwriting the balance of their support.

YMCA - YMCA SPONSORS SUMMER SCHOOL

This year marked the 69th summer for the YMCA and the 50th National Conference for the YWCA. They cooperated together in sponsoring a National Conference at Gotemba from August 22 to 26. Over 230 students representing 85 universities attended the conference. The theme was "Living Together." Speakers were: Dr. Kazuo Muto of Kyoto University, Rev. Mr. Takagi, Professor Sakurai of Aoyama University and Professor Kobayashi of Kansei Gakuin. The participants divided into groups on church, university, home and social problems for discussions.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION WEEK SEPTEMBER 18-25.

This year the NCC Church School Department, the NCC Christian School Education Association, and the NCC Christian Kindergarden Federation are cooperating to sponsor the 10th Christian Education Week.

The theme is taken from Saint Mark 16:15 "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to the whole creation."

A letter from the church school department was sent to the parents of children in schools, kindergardens and church schools. It was written by Dr. Minoru Nomura, MD, who stayed with Dr. Schweithzer when he was in Africa about 5 years ago. Plans are to send medicine but if 1 million yen is raised they hope to contribute a cottage for patients. Colorful posters with a picture of Dr. Schweitzer imposed on a map of Africa with the phrase "Let's send medicine to Dr. Schweitzer" lettered across the top have been distributed to publicize the week.

